



December 16, 2015

DEPARTMENT OF LAND SERVICES,  
EQUALIZATION, LAND MANAGEMENT, GIS MAPPING, PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

R05-16-A-053

Mr. Mathew Didier  
EPA Region 5  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604-3507; MC SWE-7J

Re: *U.S. EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grant Proposal  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, Michigan, RFP No: EPA-OSWER-OBLR-  
15-04*

Dear Mr. Didier,

The Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Authority) appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal for \$200,000 Petroleum and a \$200,000 Hazardous Substances Grants Community-Wide Assessment Grants. The County, through its Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, views this grant as an opportunity to continue to provide Brownfield Redevelopment assistance to its 18 Townships, four Cities, and seven Villages that lack the resources to actively engage in this process.

Our target community is the Village of Paw Paw and within the target community we have focused on a target area that has been the historic hub of industrial activity in the community. The target area is bound by a significant commercial corridor to the east (Kalamazoo Ave.), a major highway to the south (I-94) and to the west by the Paw Paw River/Briggs Pond. The industrial history in the target area has resulted in the presence of multiple brownfield sites of known contamination. In particular, trichloroethylene contamination in groundwater extends from manufacturing sites into residential development on the north end of the target area. Potential exposure to contaminants including vapor intrusion represents a significant hindrance to redevelopment. The target area has been and will continue to be the subject of focused redevelopment efforts by the Village. The Village of Paw Paw adopted a Master Plan in 2009 which specifically identifies redevelopment of the target area as one guiding principal. The Village of Paw Paw, with the assistance of the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB), conducted a redevelopment visioning workshop for the target area with local residents and stakeholders. The Village has accomplished much to bring about the articulated vision. The Planning Commission has developed Zoning Amendments and amendments to the Master Plan which designates the target area as a "Mixed Use Revitalization District". A key part of the new district and amended Master Plan is mixed use development, ties to water and trail assets for recreational use, and connections to the historic downtown.

This application demonstrates that the proposed project will advance the EPA priority for Region 5—coordinated public funding of brownfields. The EPA and MDEQ have funded remedial response activities at the former Paw Paw Plating site; the County funded assessment activities at the former Paw Paw Press site under a previous EPA Assessment grant; and in 2015 the County secured MDEQ grant and loan funds to complete environmental assessment and vapor mitigation activities at the former Warren Frank Cannery site. The Village of Paw Paw has also been selected as one of only ten communities throughout the State to receive support and funding through the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) pilot Rising Tides program. The RRC certification formally recognizes communities for being proactive and business friendly with effective development practices such as well-defined development procedures, a community-supported vision, an open and predictable review process and compelling sites for developers to locate projects. Through Rising Tides the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) provides evaluation support, expertise and consultation, training opportunities, and assistance to market top

redevelopment sites. The Paw Paw River in the target area connects to the St. Joseph River and ultimately Lake Michigan (Great Lakes Area of Concern). The shallow depth to groundwater, the potential for hydraulic communication of groundwater contamination with municipal storm drains, and the corresponding potential for contaminant discharge to the Paw Paw River has been identified as a concern within the target area. The Authority also looks forward to partnering with several community-based organizations to accomplish the objectives of the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant funds. The Two Rivers Coalition, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, The Village of Paw Paw/DDA/EDC,, Kinexus, Telamon The Van Buren Conservation District and the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) have all given their written support to help achieve the goals of the Assessment Grant funds. These community-based organizations will be a vital aspect to enhance the established brownfield program in Van Buren County.

By receiving these Brownfield Assessment Grant funds, the Authority hopes to continue to improve the quality of life for our community. We thank you for your time and consideration of our grant request. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward K. VanderVries - Director of Land Services

A. Applicant Identification:	Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority	F. ii. County Administrator:	Douglas Cultra
	219 E. Paw Paw St., Suite 303 Paw Paw, MI 49079		219 E. Paw Paw St., Suite 303, Paw Paw MI 49079
B. DUNS Number:	074305459		
C. Funding Requested:		Phone:	(269) 657-8253
i. Grant Type:	Assessment Grant	Fax:	(269) 657-2547
ii. Federal Funds Requested	\$400,000	Email:	cultrad@vbco.org
iii. Contamination	Hazardous Substances (\$200,000) and Petroleum (\$200,000)	G. Date Submitted:	December 16, 2015
iv. Community-Wide	Community-wide	H. Project Period:	Three years
D. Location:	Van Buren County	I. Population:	Van Buren County- 75,199 (2014 U.S. Census Estimate) Village of Paw Paw- 3,534 (usa.com)
E. Not Applicable		J. Regional Priorities Form Other Factors Checklist	Attached
F. i. Project Director:	Edward K. VanderVries		
	219 E. Paw Paw St., Suite 302		
	Paw Paw, MI 49079		
Phone:	(269) 657-8234 x17		
Fax:	(269) 657-0579		
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## Regional Priorities Form/Other Factors Checklist

Name of Applicant: Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Authority)

### *Regional Priorities Other Factor*

If your proposed Brownfields Assessment project will advance the regional priority(ies) identified in Section I.E, please indicate the regional priority(ies) and the page number(s) for where the information can be found within your 15-page narrative. Only address the priority(ies) for the region in which your project is located. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal, it will not be considered during the selection process.

Regional Priority Title(s): Region 5: Coordinated Public Funding for Brownfields

Page Number(s): 7-8

### *Assessment Other Factors Checklist*

Please identify (with an **x**) which, if any of the below items apply to your community or your project as described in your proposal. To be considered for an Other Factor, you must include the page number where each applicable factor is discussed in your proposal. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal or in any other attachments, it will not be considered during the selection process.

	Other Factor	Page #
	<i>None of the Other Factors are applicable.</i>	
	Community population is 10,000 or less.	
	Applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
	Targeted brownfield sites are impacted by mine-scarred land.	
X	Project is primarily focusing on Phase II assessments. <b><i>Assessment Grant funding will utilize \$258,000 of the total \$400,000 or 64% of the budget on Phase II ESAs.</i></b>	6-7
X	Applicant demonstrates firm leveraging commitments for facilitating brownfield project completion by identifying amounts and contributors of funding in the proposal and have included documentation.	8 & Att. D
X	Recent (2008 or later) significant economic disruption has occurred within community, resulting in a significant percentage loss of community jobs and tax base. <b><i>See also attached WARN Data and Documentation</i></b>	3

	<p>Applicant is one of the 24 recipients, or a core partner/implementation strategy party, of a “manufacturing community” designation provided by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) under the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP). To be considered, <b>applicants must clearly demonstrate in the proposal the nexus between their IMCP designation and the Brownfield activities. Additionally, applicants must attach documentation</b> which demonstrate either designation as one of the 24 recipients, or relevant pages from a recipient’s IMCP proposal which lists/describes the core partners and implementation strategy parties.</p> <p><b><i>Refer to attached documentation.</i></b></p>	
	<p>Applicant is a recipient or a core partner of HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) grant funding or technical assistance that is directly tied to the proposed Brownfields project, and can demonstrate that funding from a PSC grant/technical assistance has or will benefit the project area. Examples of PSC grant or technical assistance include a HUD Regional Planning or Challenge grant, DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), or EPA Smart Growth Implementation or Building Blocks Assistance, etc. To be considered, <b>applicant must attach documentation.</b></p>	
	<p>Applicant is a recipient of an EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning grant.</p>	

## WARN DATA AND DOCUMENTATION

### Plant Closing Documentation

Van Buren County*				
Company Name	City	Date Received	Incident Type	Number of Layoffs
Welch Foods, Inc.	Lawton	06/28/2011	Mass Layoff	121
Masonico, LLC	Mattawan	01/15/2010	Other	24
AEES Automotive Engineering Plastics	Mattawan	04/12/2010	Other	11
AEES Automotive Engineering Plastics	Mattawan	08/16/2010	Other	4
AEES Automotive Engineering Plastics	Mattawan	11/20/2009	Plant Closing	372
Noble International	South Haven	4/3/2009	Plant Closing	300
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>832</b>

\*Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) Data from 01/01/2009-11/23/2015

***Plant closing:*** A covered employer must give notice if an employment site (or one or more facilities or operating units within an employment site) will be shut down and the shutdown will result in an employment loss\* for 50 or more employees during any 30-day period.

***Mass layoff:*** A covered employer must give notice if there is to be a mass layoff which does not result from a business closing, but will result in an employment loss\* at the employment site during any 30-day period for 500 or more employees, or for 50-499 employees if they make up at least 33% of the employer's active workforce.

***Other:*** Indicates less than a 50 employee layoff.

## RANKING CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT GRANTS

### 1. Community Need

#### a. Targeted Community and Brownfields

##### a.i Targeted Community Description

Van Buren County is located in Southwest Michigan, approximately 125 miles from Chicago, 155 miles from Detroit, and bounded to the west by Lake Michigan. Most of the county is farmland dotted with small towns, watersheds, rivers, lakes and streams. The largest communities are the **City of South Haven**, with a population of 4,363; the **Village of Paw Paw**, 3,469, and smaller communities in the County such as the City of Hartford, 2,630 and the Village of Mattawan, 1,955<sup>(usa.com)</sup>. These four communities comprise only about 16.5% of Van Buren County's total population of 75,199 (2014 U.S. Census estimate), an indication of its rural nature. Van Buren's population density as of the 2010 census was 124 people per square mile, as opposed to the statewide average of 175 per square mile (2010 U.S. Census Bureau).

Although much of Van Buren County's land area is rural and agricultural, it has an industrial past on the shores of Lake Michigan and the County's interior communities. Like much of Michigan, Van Buren County has seen a decline in manufacturing and jobs, which has led to a significant loss of tax revenues and investment. With the economy in decline over the last decade, much of the former population has relocated and has been replaced by lower-income families and individuals; approximately 14,000 permanent residents in Van Buren County live in poverty<sup>(usa.com)</sup>.

The **Village of Paw Paw** has been identified as the target community in support of this Application. It is the county seat for Van Buren County and is located at the confluence of the branches of the Paw Paw River. Within this target community there is a target area focused around Commercial Avenue and Industrial Avenue (Census Tract: 118, Block Group 3). The target area is generally known as the old industrial area along the west branch of the Paw Paw River. This is an area of historic commercial and industrial development bound to the west by the Paw Paw River/Briggs Pond, to the east by a commercial corridor (Kalamazoo Ave.) and to the south by a major interstate highway (I-94). The traditional retail corridor for the Village of Paw Paw is located in the northern portion of the target area along Michigan Avenue.

The **target area** was historically developed as a manufacturing hub. The area is characterized by the presence of multiple aging and idled/vacant commercial and industrial buildings with a legacy of environmental impact. Historic industry in the area included the processing and production of paper products, electrical plating, and electric goods/automotive parts manufacturing. Multiple vacant lots formerly occupied by commercial/industrial operations are present in this area. An abandoned rail line that formerly serviced manufacturing traverses the target area. The historic operations have resulted in the identification of both petroleum and hazardous substances (primarily trichloroethylene) contaminant conditions on multiple sites and perceived/unassessed concerns for contaminant conditions at additional sites. The presence of the Paw Paw River/Briggs Pond as well as the shallow depth to groundwater in the area (<3 meters) increases the potential for unacceptable health exposure associated with brownfield contaminant conditions.

The target area is the focus of on-going community visioning and Master Plan amendments by the Village of Paw Paw. The vision for this area involves mixed-use redevelopment with increased residential and recreational opportunities balanced with continued industrial growth. The built-out nature of the Village limits mandates that this growth occur in the target area. The contaminant legacy of brownfield sites represents a significant challenge to redevelopment within this target area.

##### a.ii Demographic Information

	Census Tract Information – Paw Paw Target Area	Van Buren County	Michigan	National
Population	860 <sup>4</sup>	75,199 <sup>1</sup>	9,909,877 <sup>1</sup>	318,857,056 <sup>1</sup>
Unemployment	18.1% <sup>4</sup>	4.7% <sup>2</sup>	5.0% <sup>2</sup>	5.0% <sup>2</sup>
Poverty Rate	21% <sup>4</sup>	19.2% <sup>3</sup>	16.9% <sup>3</sup>	15.4% <sup>4</sup>
Percent Minority	4% <sup>4</sup>	9.5% <sup>1</sup>	20.1% <sup>1</sup>	22.6% <sup>1</sup>
Median Household Income	\$22,500 <sup>4</sup>	\$46,536 <sup>3</sup>	\$48,411 <sup>3</sup>	\$ 53,046 <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 Estimates, <sup>2</sup>Michigan Department of Technology, Management, & Budget (milmi.org) 2015, <sup>3</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, <sup>4</sup>U.S. Department of Bureau and Labor Statistics

Based upon the commercial and industrial nature of the target area the population within the specific census tract block is relatively small. However, the target area is bound by additional residential development. The data above demonstrate that the unemployment and poverty rates within the Paw Paw target area are greater than the County, State, and National average.

#### a.iii Description of Brownfields

The **Village of Paw Paw** target area has been utilized for various industrial and commercial operations for several decades resulting in multiple sites with known environmental impact. Specific brownfield sites within the target community include: Duo-Tang (a former paper manufacturer), Paw Paw Press, Paw Paw Plating (State Hazardous Waste Site: 80000048/CERCLIS Site: 0510481), Production Rubber (State Hazardous Waste Site: 80000193), R.A. Imus, Inc. (Leaking Underground Storage Tank [LUST]): 00002964), the Basket Factory, and Labadie Oil Company (LUST: 00039479). Many of these are orphaned sites with no viable liable party to conduct environmental response activities. Assessment activities that have been completed demonstrate that these sites are contaminated with both petroleum products (toluene) and hazardous substances (primarily trichloroethylene) and metals including nickel and cadmium. Contaminants have been identified in shallow soils, groundwater, and soil-gas. Trichloroethylene impact to soil, groundwater, and soil-gas represents a significant challenge to realizing the community redevelopment vision for this area based upon its persistence in the environment and the cleanup criteria that are difficult to achieve, particularly residential criteria. The presence of impacted soils/contaminant source areas beneath existing structures represents a concern for exposing impacted material during redevelopment and construction of these sites. Additionally, soils in open lots and the former rail line represent exposure concerns for direct contact and particulate inhalation to children that play on these uncontrolled sites. Finally, the shallow groundwater in the area increases the potential for unacceptable health exposures associated with vapor intrusion. The trichloroethylene groundwater impact extends to areas on the north end of the target area which are occupied by private residences. The potential for unacceptable health exposures is significant enough to have prompted the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to conduct response activities at multiple homes in this area including the sealing of basement sumps and the application of a vapor barrier to basement walls. The MDEQ has additionally indicated a concern regarding the potential for hydraulic communication between storm drains and shallow groundwater in the area and the corresponding concern for discharge to the Paw Paw River.

Including the specific sites within the target area detailed above, the MDEQ Inventory of Facilities (sites of known contamination-source MDEQ website) identifies 387 listings for Van Buren County. The Village of Paw Paw is identified with 85 listings or 22% of the County's inventoried sites, which pose an inherently large risk of contamination to surrounding areas and have led to **disproportionate environmental impacts** affecting the target community, as evidenced by the need for vapor mitigation at both commercial and residential structures within the target area. The table below details the health effects associated with the contaminants identified in the target communities.

Known Contaminants	Health Effects
Trichloroethylene and dehalogenation daughter compounds (e.g. Cis and trans 1,2-dichloroethylene, vinyl chloride), petroleum, metals	Liver, kidney and central nervous system disease, increased cancer risk, asthma sensitivity, headaches, skin rash and irritation, lung irritation, nausea, decreased white and red blood cell production, mesothelioma

\*from Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Toxicological Profiles

#### a.iv Cumulative Environmental Issues

A residential neighborhood is located in the northern end of the target area. In addition to the identified environmental risks, in particular the potential for contaminant vapor intrusion, the target area is subject to diesel emissions and air and noise pollution risks associated with I-94 (the main interstate between Detroit and Chicago). The abandoned rail line traversing the target area represents potential exposure risks from creosote rail ties. The Michigan Department of Community Health's Eat Safe Fish Guide identifies Maple Lake (an impoundment of the Paw Paw River) with a fish advisory limiting the number of servings per month for carp, largemouth, and smallmouth bass due to PCBs, and mercury.

## **b. Impacts on Targeted Community**

The contaminant sites and cumulative exposures can cause adverse impact on the health of the target community population through the migration of contaminants through air, groundwater, stormwater runoff and vapor intrusion into buildings. The data and observations described above show real risks of actual exposures to contaminants through contaminated soils, inhalation of diesel emissions, vapor intrusion into residential and commercial structures, direct dermal contact with contaminants as residents, particularly children, are attracted to abandoned sites. The target community's **sensitive populations** include children under the age of five (6.4%), persons under the age of 18 (24.2%) and persons older than 65 (16.0%) in Van Buren County <sup>(US Census Quickfacts)</sup>. Many of the **sensitive populations** are vulnerable to contaminant exposure. Unfortunately, sensitive groups in the target area, such as children, impoverished families, minorities, and pregnant women are more susceptible, and many lack adequate resources to address the negative health effects associated with the brownfield conditions. Short- and long-term exposure to these contaminants causes damage to central nervous system, damage to respiratory system, and increased cancer risk. There have been 371.6 incidences of cancer among Van Buren County residents between 2005-2009 (Michigan Department of Community Health, August 2012) raising concern about the proximity and nature of the sites that contain these cancer-causing substances in relation to adjacent communities. Approximately 61 hospitalizations occur in Van Buren County each year for asthma-related issues, and a total of 6,926 persons with asthma live in Van Buren County <sup>(Asthma Initiative of Michigan)</sup>. Heavy truck traffic with diesel emissions creates a cumulative threat within the target area. Vapor intrusion into private residences represents a disproportionate brownfield impact on the northern portion of the target area and remains a significant concern. The severity of this concern prompted the MDEQ to complete response activities including the sealing of sumps and application of vapor barriers within residential basements. Further assessment of residential and commercial/industrial structures in the target area relative to vapor intrusion is necessary to evaluate impacts and identify appropriate mitigation measures within the target area. The cumulative effect of unemployment, poverty, and proximity to sources of environmental contamination has a disproportionate impact on residents living near these brownfield sites. As detailed above, the poverty rate in the target area is higher than the County, State, and National average. Brownfields sites discourage investment, resulting in a cascading devaluation of property in the targeted area, disproportionately higher poverty and crime rates, and increased adverse health risks.

## **c Financial Need**

### **c.i Economic Conditions**

The relatively small population of Van Buren County, and in particular the target community, along with the decline in economic activity and property values has resulted in a significant decrease in tax revenue and left the County and the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Authority) unable to draw on other sources of funding to complete critically important environmental assessment activities within the target area and across the County. In Van Buren County tax revenues from properties have decreased due to slowed expansion, closing businesses and decreasing property values. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) has been extremely successful in the state of Michigan when private funding is available to stimulate economic growth in communities. With dwindling grant and loan funds available from the State of Michigan, Van Buren County relies solely on assistance from EPA's Brownfield Program to realize project objectives. The grant funding is critical to allow for assessment of brownfield sites within the target area that will address re-use of brownfield sites and support private investment for continuing redevelopment.

In a 2006 report on "Client Need Assessment," the Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency (SMCAA) said that over 50% of the respondents cited "not enough jobs in the county" as the biggest barrier to employment. According to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Development's WARN (Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification) data from 2009 through 2013 Van Buren County has lost 832 employees through industrial layoffs associated with multiple plant closures.

The dire economic conditions in the Village of Paw Paw target community is evidenced by the fact that the Village was selected as one of only 10 communities across the State to participate in a pilot program called Rising Tides, a coordinated effort by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to assist the community in accessing State and Federal funds that can make a positive impact on the community's plans. The Village was selected based upon a series of economic factors including unemployment rates, poverty levels and labor



participation rates. The program is also intended to provide the target community with the tools they need to design and build a solid planning, zoning, and economic development foundation to attract new businesses and help existing employers grow.

### **c.ii Economic Effects of Brownfields**

The **target community** of the Village of Paw Paw has been directly impacted by economic downturn/job loss due to contaminated properties. As detailed above, the poverty rate of 19.2% in Van Buren County is greater than the State and National average and the poverty rate within the target area exceeds the County rate. Census Tract 118, Block Group 3 for the Paw Paw target area indicates an unemployment rate of 18% (U.S. Department of Bureau and Labor Statistics.)

According to the 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southwest Michigan, "Van Buren County ... had a net loss of 1,399 jobs that earned \$1,250 per month or less and lost 976 jobs that earned \$1,251 to \$3,333 dollars per month" representing \$20M-\$60M annually.

The former Paw Paw Plating site within the target area has tax reverted to the State of Michigan. MDEQ and EPA funds have been expended to conduct cleanup and assessment activities at the site and the MDEQ maintains a lien on the parcel. The effect is a loss of tax revenue; further, vacant properties are a haven for illicit activities, placing a greater burden on short-staffed public safety departments. The Village of Paw Paw Police Department reports the need for increased nightly patrols within the target area based upon concerns with vagrancy and vandalism.

The contaminant conditions identified in the target community have resulted in decreased economic activity (fewer property transactions/redevelopments) due to the identified environmental concerns. In particular, the potential need for mitigation measures and controls relative to vapor intrusion has represented a "walk away" condition for prospective purchasers and redevelopers on select parcels within the target area. This increases the number of idled properties and promotes vacancy and blight.

The lack of investment in the target area has contributed to decreased property values in the target community. The reduced tax base in the target community has negatively impacted tax revenues to the local unit of government. In the target area both unemployment rates and average earnings demonstrate that this part of the target community has been disproportionately impacted and has not rebounded as State and National economies improve. Neighborhoods with lower earnings and greater poverty are less attractive to potential developers as the demographic data might not support private investment. The loss of investment and job creation as new construction moves to more affluent, suburban areas is incalculable. The brownfield sites in the target area present easily accessible economic opportunities for these citizens, instigating transformational change. However, the data demonstrate the need to incentivize such projects at all levels of their planning and development.

## **2 Project Description and Feasibility of Success**

### **2.a Project Description, Project Timing and Site Selection**

#### **2.a.i Project Description**

The Village of Paw Paw has been identified as the **target community** for this application. Within this target community a **target area** has been identified within the former manufacturing/industrial hub for the Village. The target area is generally known as the old industrial area along the West Branch of the Paw Paw River. The target area has been and will continue to be the subject of focused redevelopment efforts by the Village. The Village of Paw Paw adopted a Master Plan in 2009 stating that the Village vision is a community characterized by a unique small town atmosphere, a beautiful natural environment, a diverse business community and a commitment to progress. The Master Plan specifically identifies redevelopment of the target area as one guiding principal. The Master Plan also cites the desirability of attracting people to the downtown area; enhancing the Kalamazoo Avenue corridor; reducing the number of trucks traveling downtown; attracting a greater variety of housing; improving the water quality of and access to the East and West Branches of the Paw Paw River and Maple Lake (Paw Paw River impoundment); and providing youth activities to retain the young generation after graduation. Appropriate assessment and redevelopment of the target area is critical to achieving the goals of the Master Plan based upon the limited geographic space available within the Village for further growth combined with the presence of the Paw Paw River and multiple contaminated brownfield sites within the target area.

On May 12, 2012 the Village of Paw Paw, with the assistance of the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB), conducted a redevelopment visioning workshop for the target area with local residents and stakeholders. The community input indicates that stakeholders envisioned the area as a unique mixed use commercial and residential development with existing industrial areas restored to productive use. The visions used the area to connect cultural, recreational and natural resources both within the target area and throughout the Village. Specific visioning goals included: the development of boardwalks and green space to connect to pedestrian paths leading to the downtown area to the north, either along Kalamazoo Avenue, a pathway along Briggs Pond, and/or a greenway along the East Branch of the Paw Paw River; enhance the Kalamazoo Avenue corridor to be more pedestrian friendly and an attractive gateway with way finding signs to and around the Village; new residential housing in the target area, adding to the variety of housing types within the Village; providing access to Briggs Pond and Maple Lake and increased recreational opportunities; and the development of a community center.

The Village has accomplished much to bring about the vision. The Planning Commission has developed Zoning Amendments and amendments to the Master Plan which designates the **target area** as a "Mixed Use Revitalization District" which meets the resulting vision from the EPA TAB program. A key part of the new district and amended Master Plan is mixed use development, ties to water and trail assets, and connections to the historic downtown and natural assets.

The Authority is requesting, through this application, to receive a \$200,000 Community-Wide Petroleum Assessment Grant and a \$200,000 Community-Wide Hazardous Substances Assessment Grant. The Grant funding will be used to conduct Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and Community Outreach for eligible sites. Based upon previously completed site inventory and prioritization efforts the focus of the grant funding would be on assessing sites to understand and alleviate the impacts from brownfield conditions. On contaminated sites funds would be used to prepare Liability Protection documents (Baseline Environmental Assessments [BEAs]), Documentation of Due Care Compliance (DDCC – "Due Care Plans") and to conduct cleanup planning in the **target area**. Tax increment revenue capture plans (Brownfield Plans) will also be prepared on sites with sufficient investment. The Brownfield Plans will incentivize investment and redevelopment through the reimbursement of costs associated with eligible activities. The Authority will complete hazardous materials building surveys that will support demolition of blighted/idled buildings that inhibit redevelopment and investment. The Authority will additionally complete assessments of soil, groundwater, and soil-gas across the target area that will generate data that will further the understanding of the need and required extent of controls to prevent exposure to contaminants. Groundwater and soil-gas data will support an evaluation of the need for vapor barriers in association with existing and future structures. The assessment of soils will inform decisions on the redevelopment and need for clean fill/impervious cover to prevent direct contact and particulate inhalation exposures of proposed green space such as the recreational trail and trailhead. Redevelopment benefits will include: re-use of idled building properties and/or blight reduction; job creation; increased private investment and tax revenues; preservation of green space; mitigation of exposure to contaminants; and improved access to waterfront for recreation and tourism.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has received a grant in the amount of \$750,000 towards the acquisition of 10.7 miles of the abandoned railway connecting the Village of Paw Paw to the Village of Lawrence to the west. The railroad ROW runs on the southern border of the Revitalization District in the target area. Once acquired, the MDOT and the Friends of the Van Buren County Trails intend to develop a recreational trail between the two communities, the Fruit Belt Trail. Ultimately they plan to link this trail to the cities of Hartford and South Haven. In keeping with the goals of the Revitalization District, the Master Plan amendments, and in view of the trail development, the Village of Paw Paw bought a 2.5-acre parcel in the Revitalization District (the former basket factory). The Village demolished the obsolete structure and is preparing to develop a trail head with a parking area, bike and trail amenities, and enticing a trail type business to the site. In the same Revitalization District, the State of Michigan DEQ and the US EPA worked together to remove and remediate an orphaned contaminated site; the former Paw Paw Plating Company site. This property is now held by the State with liens held by the DEQ. The Village is pursuing ownership of the site to further support the establishment of a trailhead.

## **2.a.ii Project Timing**

The Authority is experienced in implementing time-sensitive funding projects and as such is

cognizant of the need to initiate key project activities in a timely manner. As an Authority operating since 2002, we have developed policies and procedures for procurement, site selection and property access. The Director of Land Services and Authority Board member Edward VanderVries will act as a **project manager** and provide leadership to the Authority members and environmental contractor(s) who will be responsible for implementing and completing project activities. The Authority has previously secured access to brownfield sites within the target area that remain available for immediate access and also is actively communicating with additional property owners within the target area, such as Great Lakes Belting, who have expressed a desire to have assessment activities completed to help inform acquisition of land for expansion of operations. We envision that upon award we will immediately begin the contractor procurement process. We would expect the contractor to prepare a QAPP for Phase II ESA within 60 days of consultant selection. Based upon our experience, the efforts to date regarding the priority sites, and the established operational and organizational processes, there would be no delay in the use of funds and we are ready to make full use of the funds during the three-year grant period.

#### **2.a.iii Site Selection**

The Authority has a County-wide inventory of known and potential brownfield sites. This was developed from state databases of contaminated sites, public input, discussions with local units of government, and other efforts. The Authority has established assessment prioritization criteria scoring sheets including job creation, investment potential, project needs, contaminant conditions, compliance with land use plans and zoning. An application from prospective purchasers, property owners, or local unit of government is prepared and submitted for evaluation by the Authority. It requires the applicant to identify property information, known and past uses of the property, environmental issues, project description, funding necessary, and assessment needed. The applicant also provides a demonstration that access to the property can be provided to the Authority. The application will also allow the Authority to understand the applicant's interest in sustainability features, creation of greenspace, energy conservations measures, alternative energy techniques, and ability to leverage additional funding.

#### **2.b Task Description and Budget Table**

##### **2.b.i Task Descriptions**

##### **Task 1: Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)**

Conduct Phase I ESAs following ASTM and All Appropriate Inquiry standards using a qualified environmental consultant. The Budget estimates an **output** of nine (9) Phase I ESAs at an average cost of \$2,500 for both the Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Grant.

##### **Task 2: Phase II ESAs and Liability Protection**

Conduct Phase II ESAs at identified brownfield sites following ASTM standards using a qualified environmental consultant. For selected sites with appropriate levels of contamination, liability protection through completion of Baseline Environmental Assessments (BEAs) and Documentation of Due Care Compliance (DDCC) Plans to address "continuing obligations" following MDEQ guidance as agreed in the Brownfield MOA between EPA and the State of Michigan, will be completed using a qualified environmental consultant. This task will also include preparation of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), Sampling and Analysis Plans and development of Health and Safety Plans. The budget assumes an **output** of eight (8) Phase II ESAs (including BEAs and DDCC Plans) at an average cost of \$16,125 to be completed utilizing each grant (16 total). **It is proposed that 64% of the grant funds will be used for Phase II ESAs.**

##### **Task 3: Brownfield Plans and Cleanup Planning**

Prepare Brownfield Plans to utilize tax increment financing. These plans would be reviewed by the Authority, submitted to the local unit of government in which the project site is located for approval, and recommended for adoption by the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners following a public hearing. Cleanup Planning may encompass feasibility reviews and site control alternatives. Both the Hazardous Substances and the Petroleum Assessment grant budget assumes four (4) projects will require Brownfield Plans at \$4,000 each, three (3) of which will also require Act 381 Work Plans at a cost of \$4,000 each.

##### **Task 4: Community Outreach, Programmatic Expenses and Travel**

This involves activities related to community outreach including: Prepare for, attend, and participate in public hearings, municipal meetings at townships, villages, and cities within the County, Authority and Commission meetings; review Brownfield Plans, Work Plans, and Report Recommendations; plan and prepare materials for meetings; create and disseminate brochures about the Grant and County resources; work with the grant partners assisting with the educational and outreach component; educate

and inform community groups, realtors, developers and interested parties about the Grant and the benefits of Brownfield Redevelopment; conduct community Open Houses, receptions, and success celebrations; and register/travel to the National Brownfield Conference.

## 2.b.ii Budget Table

### HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ASSESSMENT GRANT

Budget Categories	Task 1 Phase I ESAs	Task 2 Phase II ESA's and BEA's	Task 3 Brownfield Plans and Cleanup Plans	Task 4 Community Outreach, Programmatic Expenses and Travel	Total
Personnel				10,000	10,000
Travel				2,500	2,500
Equipment					
Supplies				2,000	2,000
Contractual	22,500	129,000	28,000	6,000	185,500
Other (Specify)					
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,500</b>	<b>129,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>20,500</b>	<b>200,000</b>

### PETROLEUM ASSESSMENT GRANT

Budget Categories	Task 1 Phase I ESAs	Task 2 Phase II ESA's and BEA's	Task 3 Brownfield Plans and Cleanup Plans	Task 4 Community Outreach, Programmatic Expenses and Travel	Total
Personnel				10,000	10,000
Travel				2,500	2,500
Equipment					
Supplies				2,000	2,000
Contractual	22,500	129,000	28,000	6,000	185,500
Other (Specify)					
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,500</b>	<b>129,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>20,500</b>	<b>200,000</b>

Estimated costs for technical activities described above are based on our experience and awareness of pricing in the marketplace.

Travel costs assume two persons attending a National Brownfield Conference (two events during the grant period) and two local State-specific brownfield conferences in each fiscal year. Travel expenses are based on an assumed flight cost of \$625 per person (\$2,500 total); car rental (\$50/day for 8 days = \$400); hotel fees of \$150/night (8 nights total during the grant = \$1,200); and incidentals (\$500 total). Fees to attend local events are modest (about \$40 per event x 10 = \$400). The air travel and other travel related expenses total \$5,000 combined from the two grants.

The personnel costs are based upon an estimate to average approximately 16 hours per month which at \$35/hour equals \$20,160 over the grant period (\$6,720 per year).

## 2.c Ability to Leverage

This application demonstrates that the proposed project will advance the **EPA priority for Region 5 of coordinated public funding of brownfields**. There has already been coordinated funding from federal, state, and local sources to support brownfield redevelopment within the target area. The EPA and MDEQ have funded remedial response activities at the former Paw Paw Plating site; the County funded assessment activities at the former Paw Paw Press site under a previous EPA Assessment grant; and in 2015, the County secured a State MDEQ \$30,000 grant and \$50,000 loan to complete assessment and vapor mitigation activities at the former Warren Frank Cannery site currently being redeveloped by Paw Paw Brewing Co. The Village of Paw Paw has supported funding on the project through the approval of

TIF capture in a Brownfield Plan. The Village of Paw Paw has also been selected to participate in a pilot program called Rising Tides, a coordinated effort by the MEDC and MSHDA to assist the community in accessing State and Federal funds that can make a positive impact on the community's plans. The Rising Tides program will be an ongoing resource for the Village of Paw Paw to further the Region 5 priority within the target area. The MEDC also provides evaluation support, expertise and consultation, training opportunities, and assistance to market top redevelopment sites. The Paw Paw River in the target area connects to the St. Joseph River and ultimately Lake Michigan (Great Lakes Area of Concern). The shallow depth to groundwater, the potential for hydraulic communication of groundwater contamination with municipal storm drains, and the corresponding potential for contaminant discharge to the Paw Paw River has been identified as a concern within the target area.

The Authority uses TIF financing to fund eligible activities on brownfield sites. Tax increment revenue can extend beyond reimbursement of eligible redevelopment activities for an additional five full years into the Local Site Remediation Revolving Fund (LSRRF) which is locally controlled and can only be used for eligible activities on other brownfield sites. The Authority has approximately \$125,000 in TIF capture available over the next three years based upon existing Brownfield Plans that are in-place in association with completed redevelopment projects. The Authority has provided a written commitment that these funds will be used as a complementary source of funding that will leverage requested grant funds (attached). When possible, the Authority will pursue State 128a Brownfield Assessment funds to conduct assessments on brownfield sites. This funding has been successfully utilized previously in the County. The MEDC and its Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) provide numerous Brownfield Redevelopment incentives related to non-environmental issues such as demolition, asbestos abatement, public infrastructure needs, and site preparation. Involvement is focused on traditional urban core projects and the target area falls within this definition. The MEDC administers the Community Revitalization Program focused on providing performance-based grants and loans to projects in traditional downtown areas. MEDC also provides access to other State and federal funds such as Community Development Block Grant funds, technical assistance, planning activities (such as housing studies), and a plethora of programs and incentives to support community development and brownfield redevelopment. These incentives will be pursued for specific projects. The Authority will petition the MDEQ to consider utilizing state grant and loan dollars on key projects. The dollars are competitive but can provide up to \$1,000,000 in grant funds and \$1,000,000 in low interest loans to pay for environmental cleanup and redevelopment activities. Other funds could be used to leverage the grant monies. This could include public sources: tax abatements, Community Development Block Grants, etc., or support from private sources.

### 3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

#### 3.a Plan for Involving Targeted Community & Other Stakeholders; and Communicating Project Progress

##### 3.a.i Community Involvement Plan

As Van Buren County seeks to recover from the difficult economic times that have put the **target community's** businesses and environment at risk, it is imperative that the redevelopment of this **target area** continues to maintain a high level of community **input**. Participation from the residents of the Village of Paw Paw and the County has been, and will continue to be vital. Many strides have already been taken in developing plans. Past visioning sessions were held to discuss issues in the **target area** and community groups expressed their satisfaction with this forum. Going forward the Authority will continue to prioritize community involvement through reaching out to project stakeholders. Future public input forums will be scheduled annually in order to continue to provide the community with opportunities to participate in defining and realizing the vision for the target area.

Through communications with local units of government, i.e., Township Supervisors and Village/City Managers, presentations at public meetings, etc. we can educate local leaders, media, and residents about project goals, progress, and outputs. We can use these forums where appropriate to hold public hearings to formally solicit input. The Authority maintains a website and regularly posts meeting agendas, minutes, and information. This website also provides technical information, Authority Staff contact information, notice of open meetings where the public participation is invited, and other resources that inform the citizens of specific issues at local sites and the resources to help them understand, evaluate and voice their concerns about the brownfields in their neighborhood. The Two Rivers Coalition is a community organization partner that will facilitate dissemination of information to the public. Regarding complex or sensitive public health issues, it may

be necessary to involve health professionals with the skills to communicate such information. County Health Department staff are available to assist in this area. Additionally, we may reach out to TAB and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to assist in these situations. The Authority will also disclose technical reports to the MDEQ, thereby making information available to the public.

Within the target area, Village leaders, property owners and tenants, and the MDEQ are already at the table discussing issues to be addressed and potential resolutions. Activities like this will continue under **Task 4** in the budget and are of crucial importance to leverage the work already completed. Citizens and community organizations will have ample opportunity to become informed and provide input on developments. The Authority plans to continue to engage local leaders, residents, community organizations, and local businesses during area-wide planning activities in their respective communities, accomplishing this through existing relationships and support from partners. As part of the outreach program, meetings will be held with supporting communities, grant partners, etc., where we will discuss the grants and provide an opportunity to learn more about brownfield challenges and opportunities. The Authority regularly provides stakeholder updates as to the Program progress and plans for additional projects. The Authority has worked with the Van Buren Intermediate School District to educate the community through a regional economic development forum that was attended by area residents, businesses, local governmental units, and others. The Authority has met with Township Supervisors and/or City/Village Managers with all municipalities within Van Buren County to identify brownfield sites. The Authority has published press releases and articles in local newspapers. The *South Haven Tribune* and the *Paw Paw Courier Leader* have the largest circulation in the County. The County also used and will continue to use media serving the Latino population, such as the newspaper *Nueva Opinion*, widely read by Latinos in southwest Michigan, and the "Tejano-Mex Super Show" (FM 103.7), a radio program with news and music for the Latino community. Van Buren typically uses these publications to disseminate their public notices and press releases to the County-wide population. The Authority has also published trifold documents on the Authority in Spanish. Likewise, the Authority completed an informative video in English and Spanish on the Authority and the tools and resources that are available. We publicize programs and successes through newsletters, the County Website ([www.vbco.com](http://www.vbco.com)), inserts accompanying tax and utility bills, and are exploring new forms of social networking.

The Authority meets monthly to review and approve projects, solicit public comment and plan for future activities. The Authority will conduct a community-wide open house annually, including a representative from the MDEQ, to discuss redevelopment alternatives and strategies for using additional funding available from the State for the Paw Paw target area. This open house will allow realtors, developers, local units of government, neighborhood groups and other affected stakeholders an opportunity to understand the distribution of sites within their community, solicit other sites and educate attendees on the merits of redevelopment and the tools and resources available.

### **3.a.ii Communicating Progress**

The Authority regularly tracks various metrics (outcomes) of the redevelopment projects it supports for annual reporting to the MSF. Data includes level of investment, job creation, tax increment collected and disbursed, square footage of new construction and residential rehabilitation, and the amount of public infrastructure created. These data are uploaded onto a publicly available database maintained by the State. The annual reports are available locally to the public through the Authority. Throughout the grant, we track additional metrics related to environmental expenditures, assessment activities, cleanup activities, etc. that are uploaded into USEPA's ACRES database and in Quarterly Reports. These are also publicly available. Through public access to these data and implementation of the Community Involvement Plan, there are ample opportunities to share progress and program successes.

Based on the size and structure of the community, we believe the above-described methods are the most effective means to have meaningful engagement. We believe they provide open avenues of two-way communication to inform the public of the program's efforts, inform the Project Team of the community's needs and desires, and will help connect residents affected by the brownfield sites to the opportunities arising from redevelopment.

### **3.b Partnerships with Government Agencies**

#### **3.b.i Local/State/Tribal Environmental Authority**

We have developed a strong and ongoing working relationship with the MDEQ, the agency in the State of Michigan assigned with the protection of human health and the environment. We have worked with the MDEQ for their participation in the Paw Paw visioning session. The Authority has also met with the MDEQ to discuss site inventory and prioritization of contaminated sites based upon exposure scenarios. Local MDEQ are involved in review of work plans, cleanup plans, and other cleanup/liability protection documents integral to the redevelopment process. They provide additional expertise related to liability and funding issues, regulatory requirements, and access to technical support on such issues as vapor intrusion and impending regulatory matters. Van Buren County has successfully obtained a MDEQ grant and loan to conduct vapor mitigation response measures at the former Warren Frank cannery site within the target area. Where U.S. SBA loans are used by local businesses, MDEQ approves cleanup plans and/or Documentation of Due Care Compliance plans to meet SBA's environmental policy requirements. If school taxes will be captured through a Brownfield Plan, it will be necessary for MDEQ or the MSF to review and approve the plan. All of these activities will meet the requirements of the Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act and the Michigan NREPA. Additionally, one of the actions a new owner may take is to put natural resource use restrictions on the property deed and notice to the local unit of government. If any of these activities occur through a Brownfield Plan, it will require review and approval from the Authority and the County Commission upon completion of a public hearing. If school taxes will be captured through a Brownfield Plan it will be necessary for MDEQ/MSF (demolition) to review and approve the plan. Through the brownfield redevelopment process, there are many opportunities for public scrutiny, input, awareness and regulatory reviews and approvals.

#### **3.b.ii Other Relevant Governmental Partnerships**

The Authority has and will continue to obtain the support of many County departments including the Conservation District, the District Public Health Department, Land Management and the Planning Community Development Department. The Planning and Community Development Department will provide their GIS Mapping Services to map brownfield sites and project successes placing the information on the County's website. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and its Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) provide numerous Brownfield Redevelopment incentives related to non-environmental issues such as demolition, asbestos abatement, public infrastructure needs, and site preparation. Their involvement and support would include review of Work Plans to provide the State's portion of tax increment revenues to the redevelopment project. The MEDC also administers the Community Revitalization Program focused on providing performance-based grants and loans to projects in traditional downtown areas. MEDC also provides access to other State and federal funds such as Community Development Block Grant funds, technical assistance, planning activities (such as housing studies), and a plethora of programs and incentives to support community development and brownfield redevelopment. Their role is critical as it helps leverage funds for the cost of non-environmental activities associated with the redevelopment projects.

We may also reach out to TAB and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTDR) to assist in community/site planning and communications with the public. We are aware of the role TAB and ATSDR can play to assist us in visioning success on specific properties, developing baseline data to track health metrics, engage with the community, and other important aspects of redevelopment on complex sites. The Authority will also work closely with local units of government to ensure redevelopment activities are consistent with zoning ordinances

### **3.c Partnerships with Community Organizations**

#### **3.c.i. Community Organization Description & Role**

The following Community Organizations have been actively participating in community-driven projects, redevelopment concepts, notifying the public about brownfield-related events, and have had the ability to leverage jobs, experience, funding, as well as promoting and contributing to sustainable and equitable developments. Additionally, the Authority has partnered with several organizations to assist with brownfield awareness, education and planning. These include: the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD), which manages many programs that educate and support area residents, businesses, industry, schools and minority groups; the Telamon Corporation, which interacts with the Hispanic/Latino population, especially helping farm workers move toward more self-sufficient employment; and the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, who helps local governments with

planning open space, trails, farmland preservation and watershed management programs.

#### **Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Economic Development Committee (EDC)**

The Village of Paw Paw, the Paw Paw DDA, and the Paw Paw EDC have been and will continue to be active participants in brownfield redevelopment. The Village/DDA/EDC has supported communication through the TAB Visioning Session including local residential and business owners, the Planning Commission, and MDEQ with regard to the Paw Paw target area. The Village has embraced the results of this effort through zoning amendments and designation of this area as a Mixed Use Revitalization District. The DDA has supported reimbursement of eligible expenses to developers through the approval of tax increment capture in Brownfield Plans. Going forward, the DDA/EDC will be able to notify community stakeholders about job opportunities, and help promote local entrepreneurial activities. The Village can assist through their communication network including direct utility billing for water/sewer, which could include educational flyers. The DDA/EDC will be able to offer community members with sustainable development opportunities and equitable development opportunities.

#### **Kinexus**

Kinexus is a nonprofit publicly funded economic development organization formed by business and community leaders to actively pursue and identify opportunities for development and private investment in the County. Kinexus operates two revolving loan funds available for entrepreneurs, helps place at-risk youth into workforce development programs, and works with employers to identify talent needs. Kinexus will continue to assist with the marketing of brownfield sites to companies looking to expand, relocate, or invest in Van Buren County. Additionally, Kinexus will help communicate to and educate companies on benefits and incentives that are available on brownfield sites as developers consider properties.

#### **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC)**

The SWMPC will be able to provide information, tools and assistance to communities in making land use decisions. They will team with the County and assess planning initiatives such as; watershed management, water quality, wetlands, trails, greenways, farms and open spaces. The SWMPC will be able to educate various stakeholders about brownfields and how contaminated sites are contributing to environmental health and make sure that brownfield goals are consistent with promoting sustainable development. In particular, the SWMPC will encourage development activities based upon their 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The SWMPC will also be actively involved in the development of the recreational Fruit Belt Trail within the Paw Paw target area.

#### **Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD)**

The VBISD will educate area residents, businesses industry, schools and minority groups and host community outreach events on the benefits of brownfield redevelopment and the various tools and incentives that are available. The VBISD has offered the use, at no charge, of their community event center for hosting outreach/education sessions (300 person capacity). The VBISD has also offered their staff Business Development Coordinator to assist in messaging/marketing the resources available through the Authority. Finally, the VBISD will also translate into Spanish educational materials about brownfield development to support outreach to the significant Hispanic/Latino community in Van Buren County.

#### **Telamon Corporation**

Telamon is a nonprofit whose purpose is to improve the lives of those in need through the operation of diverse programs for farmworkers, children from low-income families and other groups with special needs. The Authority has partnered with the Telamon Corporation to provide educational sessions and workshops to include the large Hispanic population in redevelopment decision making and provide multi-lingual assistance regarding the resources and opportunities available for brownfield redevelopment and prospective employment. The Telamon Corporation will continue to team with the Authority to hold future educational sessions regarding the redevelopment of brownfields and associated employment.

#### **Two Rivers Coalition**

Two Rivers Coalition is a 501(c)3 non-profit citizen-based organization, working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River Watersheds through conservation, education, and advocacy. Two Rivers Coalition is available to provide education and outreach to public and private landowners on a variety of topics including proper resource recovery for residents, farmland conservation practices,



wildlife habitat enhancement, storm water protection, native landscaping, and stream bank and wetland restoration. TRC is actively working on several projects in the Black River and Paw Paw River Watersheds to increase awareness and to improve and protect water quality. These projects include: a macroinvertebrate volunteer stream monitoring program; septic system inspection ordinance; vegetative buffers along waterways; county-wide road/stream crossing inventory of culverts; and wetland protection and restoration. TRC is committed to assisting in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the grants.

#### **Van Buren Conservation District**

The VBCD is available to provide technical assistance to public and private landowners on a variety of topics including proper resource recovery for residents, farmland conservation practices, wildlife habitat enhancement, storm water protection, native landscaping, and stream bank and wetland restoration. The VBCD can also connect key stakeholders to issues related to best management practices, conservation technical assistance, equipment rentals, and environmental stewardship. These goals are aligned with the challenges of brownfield redevelopment. The VBCD firmly believes in serving, educating, and empowering the community for natural resources protection. The VBCD will assist the VBCBRA in their efforts to organize, plan, and conduct Community Outreach sessions related to brownfield activities. The VBCD has pledged the in-kind service of \$1,000 to help provide outreach and promotion of meetings, workshops and events that provide awareness of brownfield activities and properties in the County.

#### **3.c.ii. Letters of Commitment**

Support letters from community organizations are attached to this proposal.

#### **4. Project Benefits**

##### **4.a Health and/or Welfare and Environment**

##### **4.a.i. Health and/or Welfare Benefits**

As brownfield sites are assessed, cleaned up and redeveloped, there are opportunities to eliminate and/or control risks of exposure to petroleum and hazardous substances. The assessment of sub-slab soil gas conditions beneath existing structures within the target area will support an evaluation of the need for mitigation measures/controls that will eliminate potential unacceptable health exposures relative to vapor intrusion. The remediation or control of VOCs such as trichloroethylene can reduce the risk of exposure and cancer rates. The redevelopment of an abandoned rail line to a recreational path and the construction of a boardwalk along the Paw Paw River will encourage a more active and thus healthful life style. Increased access to the Paw Paw River for kayaking also encourages a more active lifestyle. This will help address the obesity rate within Van Buren County which is above the national average. The high school obesity rate in Van Buren County (15.9%) is higher than the State (12.1%) and national (13.0%) average (Bronson Lakeview Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment – 2013). The use and redevelopment of sites would eliminate exposures to surface contaminated soils by children playing on vacant sites and or through the inhalation of windborne dusts. Improvements to uncontrolled sites help minimize the public's risk of exposure to lead, heavy metals, and dusts that may trigger asthma attacks and provides a benefit to those sensitive populations.

We anticipate a benefit in the welfare of the target community through the redevelopment projects which provide opportunities for new jobs and increased wages, eliminate blighted conditions, and remove areas where criminal activity has a safe haven. Blight removal will have positive effects on the neighborhood and encourage additional investment and improvement.

##### **4.a.ii. Environmental Benefits**

The Authority's anticipated outcomes related to environmental benefits first and foremost include gaining knowledge about brownfield or perceived brownfield sites that will allow action to be taken to reduce, eliminate or control contamination and any potential exposures at a site. We expect redevelopment activities at the priority sites to result in the removal and/or control of environmental contaminants. Where applicable, demolition activities can be incentivized through a Brownfield Plan, allowing access to contaminated soils beneath buildings. Removal of these groundwater contaminant sources provides an environmental benefit and reduces potential discharge of groundwater contaminants to the Paw Paw River through aging storm sewers as indicated by the MDEQ. Vapor barriers and controls will mitigate exposures to contaminant vapors. The appropriate management of stormwater on brownfield sites will ensure groundwater contaminant conditions are not exacerbated through increased mobility and discharge to the Paw Paw River.

#### **4.b Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse**

##### **4.b.i Planning, Policies, and Other Tools**

The Authority put policies into place in 2008 that encourage projects that “will reuse vacant or obsolete structures, sustainable, green building design and projects intended for LEED certification.” The Authority will prioritize projects that incorporate these policies. Redevelopment within the target area will make use of existing infrastructure and relieve pressures on urban sprawl. The Village of Paw Paw Master Plan is currently being revised to reflect the vision of the community for the target area; including zoning amendments. For redevelopment projects involving demolition the Authority will educate developers on practices to deconstruct as much of the property as possible and work with local vendors to sell reclaimed material and divert it from landfills. The future occupancy of vacant or under-utilized buildings on brownfield sites will support re-use of existing infrastructure and utilities. The Village of Paw Paw is currently pursuing a grant from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to complete enhancements to Factory St., Duo-Tang Rd. and Industrial Avenue within the target area. Maintenance and improvement of these roads permits the re-use of existing infrastructure.

##### **4.b.ii Integrating Equitable Development or Livability Principles**

During site planning with developers, we use the negotiated process of offering incentives to encourage (or possibly mandate) improvements that advance principles of equitable development and livability. In August 2012, Dan Burden, a recognized authority on livable and sustainable communities visited Paw Paw to conduct a “walkability audit” of the downtown business district, and offer suggestions for achieving the Village’s goals. Interested officials, residents and others circled the village on foot with Burden for a fresh perspective on problems and opportunities for improvement. This is supported by the vision of a boardwalk extending from the target area along the Paw Paw River north to the downtown business district. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) received a \$750,000 grant to acquire 10.7 miles of a former rail line for the development of a recreational trail (Fruit Belt Trail) with a trail head to be located within the target area.

#### **4.c Economic and Community Benefits**

##### **4.c.i. Economic or Other Benefits**

The former Duo-Tang site in the Paw Paw target area will be acquired by Harloff Manufacturing. The company manufactures custom and proprietary roll formed products that serve material handling systems, industrial distribution markets, housing and consumer food restaurant distributors. The site will be utilized by Harloff with an investment of nearly \$1,000,000 into building acquisition, building upgrades, and the installation of equipment. The investment in the site is anticipated to result in an approximately \$15,000 increase in annual tax revenue. The redevelopment is additionally anticipated to result in the creation of 25 full-time equivalent jobs.

Based upon previous redevelopment projects supported over the past several years the Authority anticipates similar investment and economic benefit in the future. It is expected that approximately 18 projects will be realized through the three year period of the U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants resulting in a potential investment of \$6,600,000 and the creation of 150-300 jobs.

The visioning session for the Paw Paw target area identified community goals that are being actively pursued including the conversion of an abandoned rail line into a recreational trail and increased access to the water front of the Paw Paw River/Briggs Pond for recreational activities. The development of a community center for cultural activities is also envisioned for this target area.

##### **4.c.ii Job Creation Potential with Workforce Development Programs**

All project developers funded by the Assessment Grants will be given information about organizations providing support for local worker training and workforce development. For instance, The Telamon Corporation, provides head-start services, and job training and placement opportunities. Kinexus additionally provides resources to help identify job training requirements/skills that prospective developers/employers are seeking.

#### **5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**

##### **5.a Programmatic Capability**

The Authority has never received a U.S. EPA Brownfield Grant. However, Van Buren County has received three U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment grants that were fully drawn down with no funds

returned to U.S. EPA (2007, 2009, and 2010). Going forward the County is assigning responsibility for performance and accomplishments of future U.S. EPA Brownfield Grants to the Authority. The Authority will be ultimately responsible for the implementation and management of the Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grants and to ensure the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of all technical, administrative, and financial requirements under the grant. These activities are conducted under the direction of the **project manager** Edward VanderVries, Lisa Phillips, the Authority Chair, and the Authority Board. Edward VanderVries, Director of Land Services Van Buren County Government (U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant Proposal and Project Director) has managed the grant application processes through Van Buren County. Mr. VanderVries has experience managing numerous grants over the last nine years. The other key players include: Karen McKay-County Treasurer; Tania Sheeley-Myers-Chief Deputy Treasurer, and Lisa Boer-Land Services Department. The department has the support of five full-time staff and available legal counsel. The department has written and released numerous Requests for Proposals and Request for Qualifications, negotiated and approved contracts, participated in mediation sessions, and carried out the implementation tasks for various grants, loans, contracts, and development projects.

If awarded a Grant, the Authority anticipates using information from this process to select a qualified consultant which meets the requirements of the Cooperative Agreement. Additionally, the above-noted support group, i.e., **County Staff** and the **Authority Board** is prepared to implement the Fiscal Year 2016 Hazardous Substances and 2016 Petroleum Assessment Grants. Many of the tools, policies, guidance materials, applications, etc., can be easily adapted to a new grant and will allow the Authority to immediately begin implementation.

#### **5.b Audit Findings**

The County, supported by the Authority, has previously fully drawn down three Brownfield Assessment grants with no adverse audit findings. In conjunction with the County, the Authority dutifully filed quarterly reports, Annual Reports, Property Profile Sheets, and quality assurance Project Plans for the Brownfield Assessment Grants previously awarded directly to the County.

#### **5.c Past Performance and Accomplishments**

The Authority has never received a U.S. EPA Brownfield Grant. However, Van Buren County has received three U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment grants (2007, 2009, and 2010). All grant funding was fully drawn down with no funding returned to the EPA. Going forward the County is assigning responsibility for performance and accomplishments of future U.S. EPA Brownfield Grants to the Authority. Additionally, the Authority Board members have successfully managed other assistance agreements awarded to Van Buren County over the years. Edward VanderVries, Van Buren County Director of Equalization and Project Director, has extensive experience managing cooperative agreements from past U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants through Van Buren County. Specific outputs from the previous assessment grants include: the completion of Phase I ESAs and Phase II ESAs (including the identification and removal of multiple orphaned or previously unregistered petroleum underground storage tanks (USTs); the completion of liability protection documents (Baseline Environmental Assessment) to provide an exemption to remedial liability for future developers (owners/operators) of contaminated Brownfield sites; the preparation of Documentation of Due Care on behalf of developers to support a demonstration of compliance with due care continuing obligations; and the preparation of Brownfield Plans which provide the capture of tax increment revenue for the reimbursement of eligible activities. Additional outputs include community outreach/public awareness flyers and informational video detailing resources available through the Authority to support redevelopment of brownfields. Through these three grants 42 projects have been completed in 10 different communities through the County resulting in up to \$38,000,000 in project investments and the creation of an estimated 410 jobs. These outputs and outcomes are accurately reflected in ACRES at this time. Some of these Highlights include:

#### 2015 Michigan Department of Environmental Quality - \$30,000 Grant & \$50,000 Loan

Van Buren County, through the efforts of the Authority, received a \$30,000 grant and \$50,000 loan from the MDEQ to conduct environmental response activities and install a vapor mitigation system at the former Warren Frank Cannery property located in the target area within the Village of Paw Paw. The grant and loan support redevelopment of the site by the Paw Paw Brewing Company which will include renting bikes and kayaks for use on the recreational trail and access to the Paw Paw River. The loan is

being serviced in part through a brownfield plan providing tax increment capture of private investment.

2012 Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant - \$217,400

Van Buren County received \$217,400.00 in funding from the State, as well as \$145,000 match from the County, to develop a multi-use trail. Primary focuses of the grants included: improvement of trailhead parking lots, design of trail systems, protection of natural resources, signage, benches, and a bike rack. Trail efforts continue; the 36.6-mile multi-use rail-to-trail from Kalamazoo to South Haven experiences improvements to its year-round trail. The rail-to-trail used an existing rail bed of a former rail line that operated in the early 1900's and brought passengers from Kalamazoo to South Haven. The trail continues to expand and productively reuse property in the County, as well as connecting communities and improving recreation opportunities.

2011 Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund - \$340,000

Van Buren County received \$254,000 in funding from the State as well as a \$85,000 match, including new basketball courts, new sidewalk, remodeled restrooms, new benches, picnic tables, and trash cans. Projects were completed in early 2012.

2010 U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant - Petroleum Assessment Grant

Van Buren County was awarded \$200,000 which permitted continuing support of existing Brownfield project sites and expansion of County activities to additional sites not previously assessed. The preparation of a Brownfield Plan for the South Haven Meijer, Inc. site leveraged private investment and promotes a sustainable program by providing funds that will be available for future assessment of sites throughout Van Buren County. All funding was fully utilized.

2009 U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant - Hazardous Substance Assessment Grant

Van Buren County was awarded \$200,000 which was used in concert with the 2007 Petroleum Assessment Grant. The grant was used to identify sites with potential contamination from hazardous substances and to conduct Phase I and II ESAs, BEAs, Due Care Planning and cleanup planning at multiple sites within communities including: the Village of Gobles, the Village of Bangor, the Village of Mattawan, the Village of Lawrence, and the City of South Haven. 2009 Hazardous Substances Assessment Grant funds were used to prepare a promotional video detailing tools available through the Authority to support redevelopment throughout the County. All funding was fully utilized.

2007 U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant - Petroleum Assessment Grant

Van Buren County was awarded \$200,000 which was used to identify sites with potential contamination from petroleum substances and to conduct Phase I and II ESAs, BEAs, Due Care Planning and cleanup planning at multiple sites within communities throughout Van Buren County. All funding was fully utilized.

**5.c.i Compliance with Grant Requirements**

The Authority understands that monitoring progress will be necessary by submitting quarterly reports, MBE/WBE requirements, ACRES entries (on a per project basis), federal financial forms, and grant closeouts, to the EPA. The Authority will track **outcomes** including the amount of private investment leveraged by the grant, jobs created, jobs retained, acres of land reused, and other factors that indicate progress toward our goals and those of the EPA. This information will also be regularly updated in the Assessment, Cleanup, Redevelopment and Exchange System (ACRES) as required by the EPA. The Authority has developed guidelines to insure that projects proposed to use grant funds will have the outcomes of protecting human health and the environment, preservation of open space, sustainable development practices and other important considerations. As the Authority implements Brownfield Plans, the county can track the amount of potential tax increment captured and available for future sites. This information will also be located on the counties website accessible to the residents, County, and the general public.

## **Attachment A – Threshold Eligibility Documentation**

## Threshold Eligibility Documentation

### **Applicant – Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Authority), Michigan**

#### *1. Applicant Eligibility*

The Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Authority) is a redevelopment agency that is fully sanctioned by the State of Michigan under the authority of Public Act 381 of 1996, the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act. The Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, created by resolution in June 2002, was established under MCL 125.2651 et al. The independent authority is governed by a nine (9) member board appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. Refer to the attached eligibility statement. The authority is responsible for promoting the revitalization, redevelopment, and reuse of certain properties. The Resolution was filed with the Secretary of State on June 3, 2002.

#### *2. Letter from the State of Michigan*

The Authority received a letter from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) acknowledging the Authority's plan to conduct assessment activities through the pursuit of Federal grant funds. Please refer to attached letter.

#### *3. Community Involvement*

As Van Buren County seeks to recover from the slow economic times that have put the **target community's** businesses and environment at risk, it is imperative that the redevelopment of the **target area** contains a high level of community **input**. Participation from the residents of Van Buren County and the Village of Paw Paw target area have been, are and will continue to be of great importance. Many strides have already been taken in developing plans for this community. The Village of Paw Paw, with the assistance of the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program conducted a redevelopment visioning workshop focused on the Industrial Avenue and Commercial Avenue industrial corridor within the target community. In the workshop participants assisted in a discussion to produce a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis and developed planning principles for the target area. This included several meetings with the group and follow-up activities by the planning commission, DDA and Village Board. The outcome of the visioning session has been utilized to inform changes to zoning in the area as well as amendments to the Village of Paw Paw Master Plan which are currently underway.

Activities like this will continue under **Task 5** in the budget and are of crucial importance to leverage the work already completed. During the project, citizens and community organizations will have ample opportunity to become informed and provide input on developments during the revitalization. The Authority plans to continue to engage local leaders, residents, community organizations, and local businesses during area-wide planning activities in their respective communities, accomplishing this through existing relationships and support from partners. As part of the outreach program, meetings with supporting communities, grant partners, etc., will discuss the grants and provide an opportunity to learn more about brownfield challenges and opportunities.

Additionally, the Authority has partnered with several organizations to assist with brownfield awareness, education and planning. These include: the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD), which manages many programs that educate and support area residents, businesses, industry, schools and minority groups; the Telamon Corporation, which interacts with the Hispanic/Latino population, especially helping farm workers move toward more self-sufficient employment; the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, who helps local governments with

planning open space, trails, farmland preservation and watershed management programs; the Van Buren County Conservation District; Kinexus, a regional economic development organization and Two Rivers Coalition, a non-profit citizen based organization working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw Watershed through conservation, education, and advocacy.

The Authority regularly provides stakeholder updates as to the progress that the Brownfield Program has made and future plans for additional projects. The Authority has worked with the VBISD to educate the community through a regional economic development forum that was attended by area residents, businesses, local governmental units, and others. The Authority has met with Township Supervisors and/or City/Village Managers with all municipalities within Van Buren County to help them identify brownfield sites within their communities. The Authority has published press releases and articles in various local newspapers to educate the County's citizens. The South Haven Tribune and the Paw Paw Courier Leader have the largest circulation in the County. The County also used and will continue to use media that assists with communicating to the Latino population, such as the newspaper Nueva Opinion, widely read by Latinos in southwest Michigan, and the "Tejano-Mex Super Show" (FM 103.7), a radio program with news and music for the Latino community. Van Buren typically uses these publications to disseminate their public notices and press releases to the County-wide population. The Authority has also published trifold documents on the Authority in Spanish. Likewise, the Authority completed an informative video in English and Spanish on the Authority and the tools and resources that are available. We also publicize programs and successes through newsletters, the County Website ([www.vbco.com](http://www.vbco.com)), inserts, accompanying tax and utility bills, and have considered exploring new forms of social networking.

The Authority meets monthly on a regularly scheduled date to review and approve projects, solicit public comment and plan for future activities. Currently, the Authority is planning a community-wide open house, including a representative from the MDEQ, to discuss redevelopment alternatives and strategies for using additional funding available from the State for the Paw Paw **target area**. This open house will allow realtors, developers, local units of government, neighborhood groups and other affected stakeholders an opportunity to understand the distribution of sites within their community, solicit other sites and educate attendees on the merits of redevelopment and the tools and resources available.

#### 4. Site Eligibility and Property Ownership Eligibility

Since this application is a community-wide proposal, this section is not applicable

**Attachment B – Letter from the State**





RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
LANSING



DAN WYANT  
DIRECTOR

November 25, 2015

Mr. Edward VanderVries  
Director of Land Services  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority  
219 Paw Paw Street, Suite 303  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

SUBJECT: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Acknowledgment of a United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfield Grant Proposal for 2016

Thank you for your notice and request for a letter of acknowledgment for the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority's (VBCBRA) proposals to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) brownfield grant program. The Department of Environmental Quality, Remediation and Redevelopment Division (RRD), encourages and supports county-wide assessment and redevelopment efforts. Our review of your proposed project meets the USEPA's requirements under the proposal guidelines.

The VBCBRA is applying for a combined \$200,000 hazardous substances and \$200,000 petroleum assessment grant which could be used to conduct assessment activities at eligible brownfield sites and facilitate new redevelopment projects. The RRD recognizes the VBCBRA's success in utilizing its previous EPA brownfield grants and would expect similar results with additional funding. As an applicant, the VBCBRA is considered eligible for these grants as an economic development agent of county government.

Should the EPA award the brownfield grant to the VBCBRA, it would stimulate redevelopment and reuse of underutilized and contaminated properties and improve the economic development and environmental conditions in the county. If you need further information or assistance regarding specific brownfield sites, please contact me at the number below or by email at [smedley@michigan.gov](mailto:smedley@michigan.gov).

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Smedley  
Brownfield Redevelopment Coordinator  
Brownfield Redevelopment Unit  
Remediation and Redevelopment Division  
517-284-5153

cc: Carrie Geyer, DEQ

## **Attachment C – Applicant Eligibility**

## Documentation of Applicant Eligibility

The Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, created by resolution in 2002, was established under MCL 125.2651 et al. The independent authority is governed by a nine (9) member board appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. The authority is responsible for promoting the revitalization, redevelopment, and reuse of certain properties.

## **Attachment D – Letters of Commitment from Community Organizations**

# VILLAGE OF PAW PAW

111 East Michigan Avenue, P.O. Box 179, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079  
Website: [www.pawpaw.net](http://www.pawpaw.net) / Office Phone: (269) 657.3148

November 25, 2015

Ed VanderVries, Director of Land Services  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority  
219 Paw Paw St., Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

On behalf of the Village of Paw Paw, I write to express support for the FY 2016 EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Assessment Grant application which the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBCBRA) is preparing. We understand the benefits of the program can assist prospective purchasers as well as business owners who have a desire to expand or purchase property.

Thanks to the EPA, the Village sponsored the EPA Technical Assistance to Brownfield (TAB) session which helped develop a vision for the old industrial area Paw Paw. It was agreed this area would offer a great opportunity for the future. The vision was exciting to all. Currently, the Village has accomplished much to bring about the vision.

1. Our Planning Commission has developed Zoning Amendments and amendments to our Master Plan, which designates the area as a "Revitalization District" which meets the resulting vision from the EPA TAB program. A key part of the new district and amended Master Plan is mixed use development, ties to water and trail assets, and connections to our historic downtown and the natural assets are included in the plan.
2. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has received a grant in the amount of \$750,000 towards the acquisition of 10.7 miles of an abandoned railway connecting Paw Paw and Lawrence. The railroad ROW runs on the southern border of the Revitalization District. Once acquired, the MDOT and the Friends of the Van Buren County Trails (Kai-Haven Trail and the Hartford -South Haven Trail) intend to develop a recreational trail between the two communities. Ultimately they plan to link this trail to Hartford and onto South Haven. This is exciting also because another group is working to establish a trail from Mattawan to Paw Paw.
3. In keeping with the goals of the Revitalization District, the Master Plan amendments, and in view of the trail development, the Village of Paw Paw bought a 2.5-acre parcel in the Revitalization District. The Village already demolished the obsolete structure and is preparing to

develop a trailhead on a portion of that property. We envision a parking area, bike and trail amenities, and enticing a trail type business to the site.

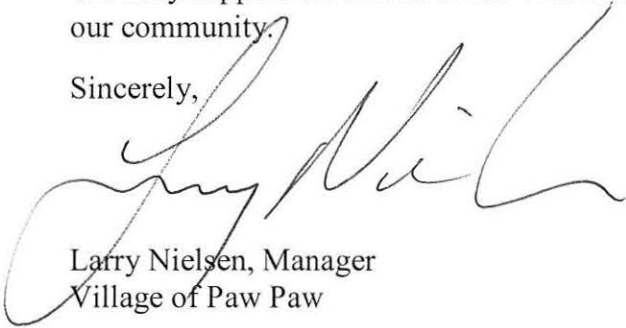
4. In the same Revitalization District, the State of Michigan DEQ and the US EPA worked together to remove and remediate a contaminated site; the former Paw Paw Plating Company site. This property is now held by the State with liens held by the DEQ. The Village is pursuing ownership of the site via some acceptable terms regarding settlement of the liens. The Village believes this site and the one already acquired are key to future development of this district. Naturally, the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBC BRA) is critical to this revitalization.
5. Currently, one large parcel (former Duo Tang property) has already become home to three new businesses bringing new jobs and investment to the district. The VBCBRA is key to revitalization and is working in concert with Michigan Economic Development Corporation and others to bring this to fruition.

We believe the grant is a needed asset in moving the vision and these efforts forward.

The Village remains committed to assisting the VBCBRA by providing a venue to educate community members about Brownfield development. We can also assist through our communication network which include flyers, Facebook postings, direct email, and utility billing inserts to our 3,100+ households and businesses.

We fully support the efforts of the VBCBRA and look forward to improvement in economic activity in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Nielsen", is written over the typed name and title.

Larry Nielsen, Manager  
Village of Paw Paw



# **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

## **VILLAGE OF PAW PAW**

129 South Kalamazoo Street, P.O. Box 179, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079  
Website: [www.uncorkpawpaw.com](http://www.uncorkpawpaw.com) / Office Phone: (269) 415-0060

November 23, 2015

Ed VanderVries, Director of Land Services  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority  
219 Paw Paw St., Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

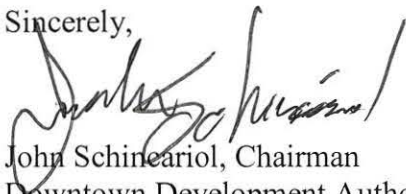
Dear Mr. VanderVries:

The Village of Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is excited about the application being prepared for submittal by the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBCBRA) is preparing. We understand the benefits of the program can assist prospective purchasers as well as business owners who have a desire to expand or purchase property. It is exciting to see what has been happening since the Village sponsored the EPA Technical Assistance to Brownfield (TAB) session. That session helped develop a vision for our old industrial area of Paw Paw. The DDA is excited by the new businesses that have grown in the area; one of which is renovating a former obsolete building while two others have taken space in the former Duo Tang buildings. The Village has acquired one parcel in preparation to construct a trailhead on a new trail being developed with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail in Van Buren County. The DDA supported the amendments to the Village's Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance which incorporated the TAB vision into reality. The DDA greatly appreciated the EPA and the DEQ cleanup efforts of the former Paw Paw Plating property. Currently, the DDA is supporting the Village in its effort to acquire the former Paw Paw Plating property from the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority and the settlement with the DEQ over liens against the property.

It is important you know that additionally, the DDA has supported Brownfield redevelopment projects in the past by allowing tax increment to be captured on Brownfield parcels through a Brownfield Plan in order to reimburse developers for eligible redevelopment activities. The foregoing of this tax increment by the DDA represents a powerful tool to leverage the private investment made by developers and incentivize redevelopment on Brownfield sites. In the future, the DDA will continue to evaluate the potential use of tax increment capture as redevelopment projects emerge on Brownfield sites.

There are other properties in the district and which are a focus of the application. The grant is a needed asset in moving the vision and these efforts forward. We are sure there would be an improvement in economic activity in our community as a result of the application.

Sincerely,



John Schineariol, Chairman  
Downtown Development Authority  
Village of Paw Paw

# VILLAGE OF PAW PAW

111 East Michigan Avenue, P.O. Box 179, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Website: [www.pawpaw.net](http://www.pawpaw.net) / Office Phone: (269) 657.3148

November 22, 2015

Ed VanderVries, Director of Land Services  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority  
219 Paw Paw St., Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

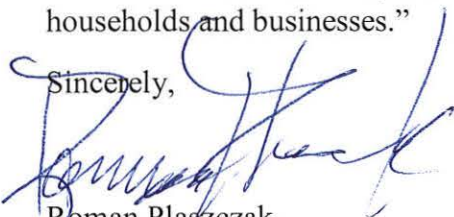
On behalf of the Village Council, I write to express support for the application submitted by the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for a FY 2016 EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Assessment Grant. We are particularly interested in supporting this application because of our past partnership with the EPA.

Thanks to the EPA, the Village sponsored the EPA Technical Assistance to Brownfield (TAB) session which helped develop a vision for the old industrial area Paw Paw. It was agreed this area would offer a great opportunity for the future. The vision was exciting to all. Currently, the Village has accomplished much to bring about the vision.

The outcomes to date are impressive and include: 1. Zoning Amendments and amendments to our Master Plan, which designates the area as a "Mixed-Use Revitalization District". 2. As a part of the mixed-use, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has received a grant in the amount of \$750,000 towards the acquisition of 10.7 miles of an abandoned railway connecting Paw Paw and Lawrence. The railroad ROW runs on the southern border of the Revitalization District and ends at a parcel the Village owns and intends to create as a trailhead for the development. 3. In the same Revitalization District, the State of Michigan DEQ and the US EPA worked together to remove and remediate a contaminated site; the former Paw Paw Plating Company site. This property is now held by the State with liens held by the DEQ. The Village is pursuing ownership of the site via some acceptable terms regarding settlement of the liens. 4. Three new business ventures have already occupied portions of the former Duo Tang property and bring new economic vitality and jobs in the District.

We believe the grant is a needed asset in moving the vision and these efforts forward. Therefore, the Village of Paw Paw remains committed to assisting the VBCBRA by providing a venue to educate community members about Brownfield development. We can also assist through our communication network which includes flyers, Facebook postings, direct email, and utility billing inserts to our 3,100+ households and businesses."

Sincerely,



Roman Plaszczak  
Village of Paw Paw





499 West Main Street, Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
P: 269-927-1064 / F: 269-927-1399 / [www.kinexus.org](http://www.kinexus.org)

December 1, 2015

Mr. Edward VanderVries  
Director of Land Services  
Van Buren County  
219 Paw Paw Street, Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

*RE: 2016 EPA Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Brownfield Assessment Grant*

Dear Mr. VanderVries;

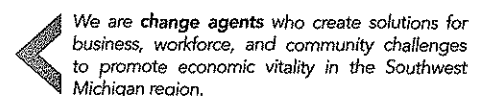
Kinexus, the regional economic development organization that provides support services for Van Buren County, is pleased to provide a letter of support to the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBCRBA) for an application for the above referenced grants. Kinexus operates two revolving loan funds available for entrepreneurs, helps place at-risk youth into workforce development programs, and works with employers in the County, and region, to identify talent needs. Additionally, the Kinexus Community Development Blight Elimination program has completed the removal of both residential and commercial structures in Van Buren County. The program eliminates blight, increases property values on neighboring sites, and encourages economic development, while providing work experience to program participants involved in the deconstruction activities. The blight elimination efforts are aligned with the goals of brownfield redevelopment.

Kinexus will partner with the VBCBRA to market and present existing Brownfield Sites to Companies that may be looking to expand, relocate or invest in Van Buren County. The VBCBRA works with Kinexus and their potential prospects to educate them on the benefits and incentives that are available on Brownfield sites and how the VBCRBA can make them come to fruition. In most cases this assistance will make or break a project on what could be a challenging site.

We look forward to an ongoing partnership to build a stronger economy in Van Buren County and the surrounding area.

Regards,

Mr. Todd Gustafson  
Executive Director  
Kinexus





## Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

December 10, 2015

Mr. Ed VanderVries  
Department of Economic Development  
Van Buren County  
219 E. Paw Paw, Suite 303  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079-1423

***Re: FY16 U.S. EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grant Application***

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is pleased to know that the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBCBRA) is applying for a Fiscal Year 2016 U.S. EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grant. SWMPC will assist the VCBRA with communicating the benefits of addressing brownfield sites to citizens of our County and the local units of government therein, as part of our planning activities. Additionally, we would like to offer development strategies based on our **2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** vision; "to cultivate a resilient, sustainable, and globally competitive knowledge-based economy across southwest Michigan that supports an improved quality of life and builds pathways to prosperity for residents." The benefits of brownfield redevelopment can contribute to enhanced watershed management, farmland and open space preservation and the creation of trails and greenways in the target areas. Hopefully by educating various stakeholders about brownfields, together we can demonstrate that a brownfield site is a viable option versus developing a greenfield site; or how abandoned, potentially contaminated sites could be contributing to the degradation of watersheds and future development opportunities for a community.

We fully support and wish you the best in your efforts to receive this EPA Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Brownfield Assessment Grant, and we will be honored to partner with the VCBRA to promote sustainable development and effective reuse of our properties and infrastructure within Van Buren County. If you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance, please contact me at (269) 925-1137.

Sincerely,

K. John Egelhaaf  
Executive Director





## VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

VBISD.org

December 10, 2015

**Jeffrey C. Mills**  
Superintendent

Ed VanderVries  
Director of Land Services  
291 Paw Paw St., Suite, 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

*Re: U.S.EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grant*

Dear Ed,

Please use this letter of support for the "Fiscal Year 2016 EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substances and Petroleum Assessment Grant Application" that is being submitted by the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. The Van Buren Intermediate School District would like to offer many supporting services for this grant opportunity.

One of the offerings that I would like to make available to you is the use of our conference center at no cost. This conference center can accommodate up to 300 community members and is centrally located in Van Buren County to hold community information sessions about all the benefits of Brownfield Redevelopment and the various tools and incentives that are available. The second offering that I can make available to you is the translating of educational materials into Spanish. We have a number of staff members on site that can assist with this need.

The Van Buren Intermediate School District can also provide the use of our Business Development Coordinator that we have on staff to assist in getting out the message to the various businesses the opportunities that Brownfield Redevelopment Programs can provide.

If you need further information about Van Buren Intermediate School District and the resources that we can bring to the table to support this grant, I would be more than happy to have this conversation. Please contact me at 269-674-8091.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey C. Mills', is written over the printed name.

Jeffrey C. Mills  
Superintendent

490 South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence MI 49064 • Phone: 269.674.8091  
Special Services Fax: 269.539.5009 • VBTC Fax: 269.674.8954 • VBISD Conference Center Fax: 269.674.8030  
Michigan Relay Center 1.800.649.3777 (Voice and TDD)

It is the policy of the Van Buren Intermediate School District that no discriminatory practices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, disability, genetic information or any other status covered by federal, state, or local law be allowed during any program, activity, service, or in employment. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies should be directed to Barbara Matthews, Director of Finance & Operations or Dave Manson, Director of Special Education, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, 269-674-8091.



## Telamon Corporation

416 North Cedar Street  
Lansing, MI 48912  
Phone: (517)323-7002  
Fax: (517)323-9840  
Email: dkuchnicki@telamon.org

November 30, 2015

Mr. Ed VanderVries, Director- CMAE III, PPE  
Department of Land Services  
Van Buren County  
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

*Re: U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant*


Dear Mr. VanderVries:

Telamon Corporation is pleased to support the 2016 EPA Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Assessment Grant Application made by the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (VBCBRA).

Telamon Corporation values bringing human services to people and communities statewide as our purpose is to improve the lives of those in need. We accomplish this by reaching out and acting as a valuable resource for farmworkers and their families. Telamon Corporation provides Head Start services, emergency assistance and job training and placement opportunities. As the Hispanic/Latino population is growing in Van Buren County, partly due to agricultural opportunities, our organization has been able to disseminate and translate information about economic and social development opportunities.

The Assessment Grants will help facilitate our mission by creating job opportunities for sensitive populations and offer opportunities in our "Head Start," and "Employment and Training" programs. Whether it is starting a business, expanding a business or assisting with neighborhood community centers, Brownfield sites present opportunities for property development through Brownfield tools and incentives available through the VBCBRA. Additionally, Brownfield redevelopments help eliminate blighted, contaminated or abandoned sites which tend to be located in low-income areas throughout our communities.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with the VBCBRA and will be pleased to have the VBCBRA receive this grant to assist in our joint efforts to make our county a safe and vibrant community. If you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance, please contact me at (517) 575-6610.

Sincerely,  
  
Donald T. Kuchnicki  
State Director  
Telamon Corporation



*An alliance of the Black River  
and Paw Paw River Watersheds*

December 8, 2015

**Board of Directors**

Kevin Haight  
*President*

Bette Pierman  
*Vice-President*

Kenneth Nesbitt  
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Joe Parman  
*Secretary*

Dave Foerster

Colleen Forestieri

Frank Jurenka

Bette Pierman

Grant Poole

Joe Von Wahlde

Mr. Ed VanderVries, Director- CMAE III, PPE Department of Land Services  
Van Buren County  
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

***Re: FY16 U.S. EPA Brownfield Petroleum and Hazardous Substances Assessment Grants Application***

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

Two Rivers Coalition (TRC) would like to show its support for the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority's (VBCBRA) attempt for the U.S. EPA Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grants.

Two Rivers Coalition is a 501(c)3 non-profit citizen-based organization, working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River Watersheds through conservation, education, and advocacy. TRC is actively working on several projects in the Black River and Paw Paw River Watersheds to increase awareness and to improve and protect water quality. These projects include: a macroinvertebrate volunteer stream monitoring program; septic system inspection ordinance; vegetative buffers along waterways; county-wide road/stream crossing inventory of culverts; and wetland protection and restoration. The goals/objectives of the VBCBRA to support sustainable redevelopment of contaminated brownfield sites are aligned with the goals of the TRC.

Although much has been done to improve the condition of the watersheds, there are many sites that need to be assessed and better understood as to their potential to impact the watersheds. The grant funds would greatly assist the community with this effort and facilitate a better understanding of the risks that contribute to the degradation of the watersheds, including the presence of multiple brownfield sites.

Two Rivers Coalition is available to provide education and outreach to public and private landowners on a variety of topics including proper resource recovery for residents, farmland conservation practices, wildlife habitat enhancement, storm water protection, native landscaping, and stream bank and wetland restoration. TRC is committed to assisting the VBCBRA in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the grants. Our involvement with the program is consistent with our mission and the work we already do in Van Buren County; we are committed to providing education, research, and conservation programs to our community. Additionally, TRC is willing to help provide outreach and promotion of meetings, workshops, and events that provide public awareness of brownfield activities and properties in Van Buren County.

We look forward to working with VBCBRA on this project that will benefit our entire community.

Sincerely,

Kevin Haight  
President

***Two Rivers Coalition is a citizen-based group working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River watersheds through conservation, education, and advocacy.***

219 Paw Paw Street, Suite 301, Paw Paw, MI 49079  
[www.TwoRiversCoalition.org](http://www.TwoRiversCoalition.org)



## VAN BUREN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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November 30, 2015

Mr. Ed VanderVries, Director- CMAE III, PPE Department of Land Services  
Van Buren County  
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 302  
Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant

Dear Mr. VanderVries:

The Van Buren Conservation District (VBCD) would like to show its support for the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority's (VBCBRA) attempt for the U.S. EPA Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment grants.

The VBCD is available to provide technical assistance to public and private landowners on a variety of topics including proper resource recovery for residents, farmland conservation practices, wildlife habitat enhancement, storm water protection, native landscaping, and stream bank and wetland restoration. The VBCD can also connect key stakeholders to issues related to best management practices, conservation technical assistance, equipment rentals, and environmental stewardship.

The VBCD is committed to assisting the VBCBRA in accomplishing the goals and objectives of this grant. Our involvement with the program is consistent our mission and the work we do in the Van Buren County. We have been leaders in providing education, research and conservation programs to our community. The VBCD would like to provide the in-kind service of \$1000.00 to help provide outreach and promotion of meetings, workshops and events that provide awareness of Brownfield Activities and Properties in our County and projects the VBCBRA are working on.

The VBCD firmly believes in serving, educating, and empowering our community for natural resources protection and the local people should make decisions on conservation issues at the local level. We will assist the VBCBRA in their efforts to organize, plan, and conduct Community Outreach sessions related to Brownfield Activities.

We look forward to working with VBCBRA on this project that will benefit our entire community.

Sincerely,

AJ Brucks  
Executive Director

## **Attachment E – Documentation of Commitment of Leveraged Funds**



**DEPARTMENT OF LAND SERVICES**

EQUALIZATION, LAND MANAGEMENT, GIS MAPPING,  
PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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December 16, 2015

Mr. Mathew Didier  
EPA Region V  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604-3507; MC SWE-7J

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfield Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Assessment Grant Proposal –  
Commitment of Leveraged Resources

Dear Mr. Didier:

In an effort to support the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority's (The Authority) request for U.S. EPA Assessment Grant funds, this letter serves to pledge funds that have been raised by the Authority through tax increment finance (TIF) capture and other proceeds. The Authority has approximately \$125,000 in TIF capture available over the next three years based upon existing Brownfield Plans that are in-place in association with completed redevelopment projects. The funds are available to use as leverage for additional brownfield redevelopment projects. In particular, these funds are available as loans for cleanup activities or to aid transformational projects with strong financial needs with redevelopment and cleanup activities. Thus, these funds are a complimentary source of funding that leverage the U.S. EPA funds and allow the U.S. EPA Grant to be used almost exclusively for the assessment activities described in our proposal.

The Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority has a long history of successful brownfield redevelopment projects. The U.S. EPA Assessment Grant leverages our local commitment and allows us to offer a full range of assistance to deserving brownfield redevelopment projects. The Authority has been our most successful program in terms of redevelopment and economic development creating over 410 new full-time jobs and putting more than 17 sites back into safe productive activity. Please allow us the opportunity to maximize the dollars being spent on redevelopment activities that truly make a difference to our residents, our community, and our region.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward VanderVries".

Edward VanderVries, MMAO IV, PPE  
Director of Land Services, Equalization, Planning, & Economic Development  
Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Project & Grant Manager, Board Member



**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

\* 1. Type of Submission:

- ☐ Preapplication
- ☒ Application
- ☐ Changed/Corrected Application

\* 2. Type of Application:

- ☒ New
- ☐ Continuation
- ☐ Revision

\* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

\* Other (Specify):

\* 3. Date Received:

12/17/2015

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

**State Use Only:**

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

\* a. Legal Name:

Van Buren County and its Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

\* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):

386007133

\* c. Organizational DUNS:

0743054590000

**d. Address:**

\* Street1:

219 E. Paw Paw Street

Street2:

Suite 302

\* City:

Paw Paw

County/Parish:

\* State:

MI: Michigan

Province:

\* Country:

USA: UNITED STATES

\* Zip / Postal Code:

49079-1441

**e. Organizational Unit:**

Department Name:

Brownfield Redevelopment Autho

Division Name:

**f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**

Prefix:

Mr.

\* First Name:

Ed

Middle Name:

\* Last Name:

VanderVries

Suffix:

Title:

Director of Land Services

Organizational Affiliation:

\* Telephone Number:

(269) 657-8243

Fax Number:

\* Email:

vandervriese@vbco.org

## Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

### \* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

B: County Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

### \* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

Environmental Protection Agency

### 11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

66.818

CFDA Title:

Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements

### \* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

EPA-OSWER-OBLR-15-04

\* Title:

FY16 Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants

### 13. Competition Identification Number:

Title:

### 14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

### \* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Community Wide Assessment - Assessment of potential Petroleum and Hazardous substance contamination at brownfields in Van Buren County, Michigan.

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424****16. Congressional Districts Of:**\* a. Applicant \* b. Program/Project 

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

**17. Proposed Project:**\* a. Start Date: \* b. End Date: **18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="400,000.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="400,000.00"/>

**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- ☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .
- ☒ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- ☐ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

☒ \*\* I AGREE

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix:  \* First Name:   
Middle Name:   
\* Last Name:   
Suffix:

\* Title: \* Telephone Number:  Fax Number: \* Email: \* Signature of Authorized Representative:  \* Date Signed: